

Board Special Meeting

Work Session: Boundaries

Monday, November 19, 2018, 4:30 – 6:00pm

Board Auditorium, John Stanford Center

2445 – 3rd Avenue South, Seattle WA 98134



Minutes

Call to order

Director Harris called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m. Directors present: Harris, Patu, Burke, Mack. Director Pinkham arrived at 5:52 p.m. Staff present were: Denise Juneau, Superintendent; Michael Tolley, Chief Academic Officer; Ashley Davies, Director of Enrollment Planning.

Director Mack introduced the topic of Growth Boundaries. Michael Tolley thanked Directors for the opportunity to address the Board and hear their feedback and reviewed the agenda. He reminded the Board that this conversation started in September with the work session on the Student Assignment Plan, and that they are hoping to get direction from Directors before taking the Board Action Report to the Operations Committee on Dec. 6. He said there would also be looking at several areas where decisions are anticipated being made for the 2019-20 school year, as well as looking at decisions already made for 2019-20.

Growth Boundaries Overview

Mr. Tolley provided some background related to School Board approval, in 2013, of numerous boundary changes to be implemented over time, particularly around facilities work taking place. Since then, the district has continued to build schools and have discussions each year as boundary changes were implemented to accommodate overcrowding in the schools.

Next steps in the process were discussed as follows: Boundary changes for the 2019-20 school year will be presented to the Operations Committee Dec. 6, 2018; final approval of changes for 2019-20 is scheduled for January 2019, in time for open enrollment in February; and capacity management policies will then be reviewed in 2019.

Director Mack asked Deputy Superintendent Stephen Neilson to address the upcoming efforts to revise the capacity management policy, noting that the policy has not been updated in some time and the complexity of the process, which involves boundaries, the student assignment plan, wait lists, budget, and staffing at schools.

Mr. Nielson spoke to staff's recent discussion with Director Mack about how to improve these complicated and multifaceted processes in a manner that recognizes time constraints for staff and the Board, availability of resources, and the anticipated \$50 million budget shortfall. He stated it is important to discuss the various pieces that go into the capacity plan and how staff supports this and other efforts to serve students. The process will begin in 2019 and would be subject to available resources.

Mr. Tolley continued to address the next steps for boundary changes, picking up after January 2019, including the following:

- Spring and Fall 2019: Community engagement for 2020-21 boundary changes for school year.
- Jan 2020: Final approval of boundary changes for 2020-21 in preparation for open enrollment in February.

Director Burke commented that this policy work has been long awaited, but that it is important to recognize that we are in a budget challenge area and disruption does have a cost. He mentioned it's important to find ways to get further out in front and make decisions early enough to have grandfathering as a universal principle so families have predictability and limited disruption.

Director Harris said she hoped to leave tonight with an acknowledgement and some guiding principles on how things can be done differently with respect to community engagement.

Ms. Davies reviewed capacity issues previously discussed by the School Board in September and provided updates as follows:

- Green Lake Elementary: Not moving forward with changes. McDonald will have an additional kindergarten class in 2019-20. Seen some stabilizing at Green Lake. B.F. Day enrollment has been growing. Holding on making any change to avoid shifting capacity problem to a different school. Staff will be monitoring Green Lake/B.F. Day.
- Magnolia Elementary: Anticipate BAR on Dec. 6 regarding boundaries for the new Magnolia Elementary.
- Maple Elementary: Community discussions in June and October. Feedback on engagement, and requests to do more thorough engagement and study of the capacity challenges. A boundary change is scheduled for 2020-21 when the new, larger Wing Luke Elementary opens.
- Robert Eagle Staff Middle School: There are capacity challenges related to having two schools located in the building (Robert Eagle Staff MS and Licton Springs K-8). After a community meeting on Nov. 7, staff recommends holding any changes until the 2020-21 school year and doing more engagement prior to making a decision.
- Mercer International Middle School: While there has been some discussion of making a boundary change for 2019-20, there has not been engagement with the community. Some changes to boundaries for Mercer align with opening of Wing Luke. Staff are recommending waiting until 2020.

Review of schools with potential changes for 2019-20

Magnolia: Ms. Davies referred to a summary of what was heard during two community meetings this fall and three scenario maps provided in the packet. Ms. Davies summarized work to date noting that engagement started in 2017, when the opening of Magnolia has been scheduled for 2018 and initially included all elementary schools in Queen Anne and Magnolia. Subsequently, the opening was delayed until fall 2019. Ms. Davies noted that based on feedback and new information from 2017, 15th Ave. W. has been assumed to be the eastern boundary and that Queen Anne Elementary will remain an option school. Ms. Davies spoke to anticipated

impacts of the opening of Magnolia Elementary on Blaine and Lawton and middle school seats for the area and summarized boundaries scenarios shared and feedback received during two fall 2018 community meetings.

Ms. Davies spoke to potential options for grandfathering students in the elementary grades and how the need to ensure viability of the new school and impact on middle school grades at Catherine Blaine. Ms. Davies noted that the staff recommendation is for partial grandfathering with Magnolia opening as a K-5, but rising 5th graders could remain enrolled at their current school and grandfathering for all Catherine Blaine middle school students including rising 5th graders. Ms. Davies noted the timeline for a BAR regarding Magnolia boundaries and requested Board feedback regarding the boundaries scenario and grandfathering.

Directors and staff discussed the scope of grandfathering proposed for the Magnolia. Director Mack asked for additional information regarding opening Magnolia with fifth grade, how grandfathering would relate to students that would otherwise be split between schools, and access to Catherine Blaine K-8 for Magnolia families.

Ms. Davies said Magnolia is anticipated to open completely K-5. With grandfathering for 5th graders, the 5th grade may not be full, but that would only be for one year. There are less than 50 students impacted by a new assignment to Magnolia who have an older sibling in grades 6-8 at Catherine Blaine. There was a question about adding a tiebreaker for these students who would be assigned to Magnolia. In the past, the District has not wanted to add more tie breakers and complexity to student assignment plan. Adding more tiebreakers takes away element of choice for all families across the district.

Director Mack stated the 6-8 portion of Blaine needs a new plan to have option for other Magnolia schools to opt in. Ms. Davies agreed that we can explore something different to address that.

Director Burke asked for clarification of the term “rising 5th graders” and why it is called out specifically to attend Blaine.

Clarification was given that it means that those rising from 5th to 6th and currently living in the Blaine attendance area will be able to continue to 6th grade at Blaine, even if their address will now be in the Magnolia attendance area.

Director Burke asked if there are right size numbers for each of these? Director Mack said they are on page 8 of the slide deck, and that Blaine K-5 going down dramatically to less than 300. This opens more space for middle school students, and the community is excited to have more middle school students in that K-8 experience.

Director Burke asked that think about not just current right size capacity, but a five-year projection against that right size capacity. Director Mack said that fits into the capacity management discussions coming up.

Director Harris asked Ms. Davies to address an email the Director's received regarding the socio-economic status of these plans and multi-family housing.

Ms. Davies said the question is specifically regarding the balance between those who rent compared to those who own between the different scenarios. In the Magnolia Elementary area for each of the scenarios, there are more rental units than the others, but that in each attendance area, there is a large percentage of home ownership. The percentage of families renting in all three school attendance areas is smaller than most other schools in the district. There was also a question around the number of students coming from different types of housing and how that impacts PTA and opportunities at the school. Part of the difference is because of the geography of the area. We have drawn continuous boundaries because that is the way the district draws boundaries. We have drawn them in a way that we have families attending schools that are for the most part those that make sense from a walkability standpoint.

Director Mack said that in Scenario D, the percentage of rental units are: Blaine 11%, Lawton 19%; Magnolia 30%. That is the most balanced of scenarios. In Magnolia around edges, highest property value in city. It's a very mixed income neighborhood. From a geographical as well as demographic mix standpoint, a lot of thought went into these boundaries. Scenario D has the best mix possible.

Mr. Tolley asked for some specific direction from the Board around grandfathering related to the Magnolia boundaries. Director Mack asked if there was a general consensus around partial grandfathering of grade 5 and rising 5th graders to Blaine. Director Burke said that he supports as much grandfathering as the budget allows.

Director Harris asked what it will mean if Magnolia ends up with a very small 5th grade class with the weighted staffing standards when we've heard about smaller classes and equity of offerings? Ms. Davies replied that it's possible that there would be a small number of 5th grade students at Magnolia during the one-year transition. The principal would have to pay attention providing the necessary resources for those students. The school will have five other grades to be able to support potential needs for those students.

Director Harris proposed opening as a K-4 to avoid a small group of 5th graders. Director Mack said she didn't see that having a 4/5 split will require mitigation, with Director Harris asking about the large number of emails the Board has received about split classes in the past. Director Mack said she believes the issue there is about the disruption of changing after school has already started rather than the actual split classrooms. Mr. Tolley said the district tries to limit split classes but will not be able to eliminate them. Director Harris said she understands that parents don't want their students at different schools, but the district cannot afford 15-student classrooms. Director Mack replied that some of this will be part of the work on capacity and tying in the weighted staffing decisions. Director Harris commented that she would like as much clarity on the final plan as possible.

Superintendent Juneau asked when parents make the decision on where their students attend. Ms. Davies replied that most make the decision during the first two weeks of open enrollment,

though they do technically have until May 31 to submit a choice form. Those that submit in those two weeks learn about assignments in April.

Director Mack said that this is part of the complex capacity management work. She agrees that there is a need for clarity in things like how many seats are available and what the timing is. Director Harris asked if that would be connected to an earlier deadline instead of May. Director Mack said that could be part of the discussion. Ms. Davies said if there is a desire to move up the deadline from May 31, or the dissolution of the waitlist from August 31, it can be discussed.

Director Mack noted that dissolving the waitlist does not mean moving and that she thought Director Harris was asking for clarity on when waitlists will move so families can have predictability and the district can predict for budget process.

Maple Elementary, Van Asselt Elementary and Wing Luke Elementary: Ms. Davies then moved to discussions of Maple, Van Asselt and Wing Luke. She explained there are previously approved changes for 2020-21, when the new, larger Wing Luke opens. Maps showing previously approved and a modified option were shared with the community in October. Maple is extremely overcrowded with portables and an addition that are full. It is an open concept school, which provides more stress to shared spaces. Ms. Davies recognized that most of the Board were not here when these boundary changes were approved, and many families were also not a part of the process because they have entered the school since 2013. Director Harris asked if it was true that a race and equity lens was not applied in 2013. Ms. Davies confirmed.

Ms. Davies said that this is the last change from the 2013 boundary project and that boundary changes from now on will require considering how we can improve on our process. She showed a chart with enrollment and capacity numbers for each of the three schools.

Ms. Davies then then reviewed the engagement so far which began in spring of 2018 with conversations with the principals. A meeting was held in June to talk about moving the timeline up for change area 73, which moves students from Maple to Van Asselt. Some people who attended the meeting pointed out that the approved change has a disparate impact on students of color and students needing special services. A community meeting was held in October to share another proposal that was brought forward for engagement. Specifically, a change to bring part of Georgetown to Van Asselt instead of families in the mid-Beacon Hill area. Concerns from both communities around both scenarios have been shared. After the October community meeting, feedback and concerns were shared with Operations Committee on Nov. 1. Interest was expressed in waiting and doing more engagement and aligning the changes with the Mercer boundary change, which is planned to take place in fall 2020 and impacts this community as well.

Director Mack added that an analysis needs to be done around these schools and look at what might have changed in five years. In 2013, previous Board directed that this area should be re-examined before implementing.

Ms. Davies said that in 2013, other changes were looked at, and those included other communities who haven't yet been involved in the conversation. During the process those

communities will need to be engaged so can clearly understand the context and communities involved. If no there is not change to Maple in 2019, the school will most likely repurpose another classroom or possibly add a portable, which may require a variance due to lot coverage.

Director Harris commented that a couple years ago, the Board voted to fund a program that allows the district to map boundaries and analyze data. She asked if the district can hold a meeting in district office or out in community so communities can see in real-time animation wise what is being talked about.

Ms. Davies replied it was possible if that's what the Board wants. The program has two settings that allow staff to get into the data at a granular level for information gathering and analysis. The program also has a setting where we can show scenario planning without showing the students involved, and that could be used with the Board and the community.

Director Mack said she thought this could be a good tool for engaging the community.

Director Burke asked about the cost and time of the lot coverage analysis that would be needed in order to place a portable.

Ms. Davies replied that she doesn't know the costs. It would be something Capital Projects could provide, and that it would make it more expensive than just placing a portable. Director Mack pointed out that these funds would come from the capital budget.

Director Burke said it would be helpful to know the costs associated before going forward. He then asked about how the areas, such as area 73, were determined. He asked what level of granularity was used to set those areas and if they are ever subdivided or changed.

Ms. Davies said they were change area numbers assigned during the 2013 Growth Boundaries Project, and they could probably be changed if desired. For many of them, they were assigned to natural communities, but that is not the case in every situation.

Director Mack asked if there was a general consensus around having community engagement for a change in 2020-2021 instead of changing in 2019-2020.

Director Harris stated, asked that the Board think about the fiscal sustainability given next year's budget. If we have to go for a departure, who much does that cost and how much human capital and time is involved.

Director Pinkham asked if there is FRL percentages for these areas? Some of feedback is that if you move us, we can't get to school for events. I think there might be some correlation between FRL and those who drive and those who rely on public transportation.

Ms. Davies replied that the district is not allowed to use that data from an individual student perspective, which would allow us to do this analysis.

Director Harris said other districts use aggregated FRL data. She mentioned that geography and transportation need to be considered.

Director Mack said it sounds like the analysis needs to include transportation and FRL numbers.

Ms. Davies then asked if that means staff is to follow up with the data and wait. Director Mack said the consensus is to wait for 2020-21 and conduct community engagement.

Superintendent Juneau asked the reason that Enrollment Planning can't use the FRL data. Ms. Davies said that they've tried for two years and been told by Legal that they cannot use it.

Robert Eagle Staff Middle School and Licton Springs K-8: Ms. Davies reminded the Board that they have previously talked about the over-crowding within the shared building. In addition to housing the middle school and Licton Springs K-8, it is also the middle school HCC pathway school for the area. The building was initially designed as a 1,000-seat middle school, but serving elementary students in Licton Springs means lower class sizes and less than 1,000 seats for the building. This makes the total capacity around 912. She then shared the enrollment and capacity numbers for each school, as well as Whitman Middle School and Jane Addams Middle School.

Director Mack pointed out that Eckstein isn't included in the enrollment and capacity numbers, and borders RESMS attendance area. It is another potential school if it has room. Ms. Davies said Eckstein is full.

Ms. Davies talked about engagement that has happened, which started with discussions with principals about potential options that could be brought forward to discuss with the community for feedback. Three Directors were able to attend the meeting and heard the conversations, questions and concerns from the community. At the meeting, four different options were reviewed based on district staff analysis.

Director Harris asked about the four options being based on staff analysis, and then asked if the communities were asked for ideas. Ms. Davies said the community was not asked for options.

Director Mack acknowledged that the site council at Licton Springs provided some suggested options, which Board Directors had at their tables. She said she was hopeful that going into this process, all options could be discussed.

Ms. Davies provided a summary of what has been heard from families. One option considered was to no longer split Olympic View feeder pattern to two different middle schools. It's one of three schools that have this split across middle schools. The split comes from some boundary changes from 2013 which were not implemented. Enrollment Planning has heard support for this change from families and recommends moving forward with this piece. Otherwise, the district decided to put a hold on any other changes and have additional engagement, including meeting with Licton Springs before winter break.

Director Pinkham asked how it was determined that 160 is the right size for Licton Springs vs. the 250 the Board approved space for. Ms. Davies said those right-size capacity determinations are provided by Capital Projects. Director Pinkham said it seems that the right-size capacity should be the 250.

Director Mack said that one of the issues is that while the Board requested 250 seats, the right size capacity is based on the building's current configuration.

Director Burke noted that right size capacity is smaller than current enrollment, but there are several classes where students could be added without needing more classrooms. It seems like right size should be current enrollment plus more, not less. It's an entry point to the conversations around promises that have been made.

Director Harris noted all the changes that Licton Springs has experienced as a school including being moved. She questioned how the school could grow with all the change. She also stated that she heard from families at Director Pinkham's community meeting that Whitman does not have all the programs it needs because of lower enrollment.

Director Mack stated that with the decision to delay to a change until 2020-2021 there will be crowding. This could mean another portable. One solution that will help would be to allow the change for Olympic View families and allow grandfathering. She also noted that there is space at Whitman, and if BEX V passes, the current portables could be replaced. She suggested the district move waitlist for Whitman from Eagle Staff. She suggested adding language in SATP about commitment to making changes if they help relieve capacity.

Ms. Davies said there is a logistical challenge with moving the waitlist. Students are assigned to a waitlist and called in order. It might not be that Eagle Staff students are at the top of the wait list and moving it would be pulling students from another school. It's something we'll need to think about because when a waitlist doesn't move, it's about the totality of the system, and not just about two schools.

Director Mack said that she thinks given the challenges, the district might want to consider a temporary tiebreaker for those requesting to move from Eagle Staff to Whitman. She isn't sure why there would even be a waitlist at Whitman when there is plenty of room, but realizes that it's part of the capacity management plan. She wants to have something to take to families and show there is opportunity to change and alleviate some of the challenges.

Director Harris asked how the community engagement that is to take place before winter holiday would be different than what has been done thus far.

Ms. Davies replied that for the engagement prior to the holiday would be a meeting specifically with Licton Springs K-8 to hear from their school community. Families asked that Licton Springs K-8 have its own community meeting.

Director Pinkham asked about Cascadia, which is on the same site and serves the same grades. He wants it brought into the conversation. Director Mack replied that there is a lot of ideas that have to be brought into the conversation.

Director Burke said it will be important to honor and improve the culture at the building. Environment at the building needs to be conducive for all students.

Director Harris said one of the things heard is that there are two different directors for Licton Springs and Eagle Staff. Perhaps a change could be made to have the same director at both schools could help.

Director Mack pointed out that it was 6 p.m. and asked to extend the meeting for 10 minutes.

Ms. Davies said that was the end of the discussions about possible 2019-2020 school year changes. The only changes that will be moved forward are those related to opening Magnolia, and the reassignment of Olympic View to Jane Addams for middle school with grandfathering. The others will be held off until fall 2020 to allow for more engagement.

Review of approved changes for 2019-20

Ms. Davies then reminded the Board and families that Lincoln is opening in the 2019-2020 school year. Enrollment Planning is working with the principals impacted by this change to provide them with the information they need to support families.

Director Mack has been hearing questions about sibling grandfathering at Ballard since Lincoln will have no space for grade 11 or grade 12. She recognized that it's late in the process to make additional changes.

Director Harris said that the district can't accommodate every request. She also mentioned she's heard a lot about Japanese language at Lincoln and asked who has responsibility for the option school fair.

Mr. Tolley replied that the principal for Lincoln has plans to offer Japanese, but that it will always be a challenge to get a qualified teacher in place and it's a part time position, which makes it more challenging. In order to offer various levels, the district may need to mitigate to ensure that it's a full-time position.

Ms. Davies said the Admissions Fair is scheduled for January 19, but she wants to get some more details settled before sharing the information. It will be at Mercer Middle School instead of Cleveland because parking was difficult for some at Cleveland.

Review schools with potential changes for 2020-21

Ms. Davies highlighted that Mercer has been mentioned related to the changes at Maple, Van Asselt and Wing Luke. Capacity challenges at Mercer will require moving one or two elementary schools that are currently feeding into Mercer to feed into other middle schools. That will not only help relieve capacity at Mercer, but it will also boost enrollment at Washington.

Next Steps

Ms. Davies reviewed next steps. Staff will begin moving forward with changes for the 2019-2020 school year at the Operations Committee Meeting on Dec. 6. We anticipate bringing forward for introduction at the Dec. 19 Board Meeting and having action in January.

Director Mack said that there should be another work session around boundaries in the spring instead of waiting until fall.

Director Burke has been in conversations with Ms. Davies around Student Assignment Transition Plan issues. One thing that has come up is a desire for more set aside seats for heritage speakers at language immersion schools, and that he has asked for analysis. Director Mack followed with a request for data on the number of heritage speakers who did not get in to the immersion program.

Director Pinkham asked to consider other factors can be used if cannot use FRL data, like a survey.

Director Mack adjourned the meeting at 6:10 p.m.